



State of Louisiana
Department of Environmental Quality



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DEQ ISSUES FIRST CORRECTIVE ACTION MANAGEMENT PERMIT IN LOUISIANA

(Baton Rouge, April 23, 2002) -- The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has issued a permit to Dow Chemical Company in Plaquemine that allows an existing on-site landfill to receive designation as a Corrective Action Management Unit (CAMU). The permit is the first of its kind in the state of Louisiana.

CAMUs are special units created under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) to facilitate treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes handled during on site cleanup activities. These units help remove the disincentives of cleanup that RCRA regulations sometimes impose. The permit requires Dow Chemical to operate the CAMU under DEQ approved groundwater monitoring and corrective action plans to ensure that there are no unacceptable releases to the environment. The permit also requires a full waste characterization of the soil and an approved health and safety plan to protect workers and nearby residents before cleanup can begin.

The action is intended to limit Dow Chemical's consolidation of wastes to a single area in the facility as the company moves wastes from its Lighthouse Road area of the facility to the Northwest Landfill. The permit also allows for waste from the 700 Rail Yard site to be deposited in the landfill. The Lighthouse Road area is inside the levee batture and DEQ is concerned that potential future erosion of topsoil, caused by annual flooding of the area by the Mississippi River could result in unacceptable releases of contaminants from the site.

The RCRA Corrective Action Program requires investigation and cleanup of releases of hazardous wastes and hazardous constituents. Facility evaluations are based on human health and environmental risks posed by actual or potential releases to the environment, potential migration pathways, and waste characteristics. In a clean up situation, where waste already exists, site owners or operators often have legal options that allow them to minimize or avoid application of the RCRA regulations, which discourage cleanup or the amount of wastes cleaned up. In part these legal options involve capping waste in place or in some cases not engaging in cleanup at all. These approaches are less desirable than remedies that involve excavation of some, or all, waste for more aggressive treatment and/or off-site disposal. Upon signing the permit for Dow Chemical, Linda Levy, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Services of DEQ stated, "We consider permits of this type to be an important tool in fulfilling DEQ's mission."

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